

## Today's News - Tuesday, November 29, 2011

- Heymann calls out architects for their "rhetorical use of landscape" that "is a form of deceit, a means-versus-ends intellectual sleight of hand" because they "know this is a shorthand method of tapping into a primary vein of cultural meaningfulness" (Part 1 of 3 - we can't wait for the next two!).
- Rochon rues that "North American cities continue to ignore the invaluable civic lessons" she found in Paris's "divine" Place des Vosges.
- A new research group at Columbia University comes up with what one might consider a totally bizarre idea: connect Lower Manhattan to Governors Island using landfill - "It may be an impossible project. But it is the kind of big thinking that New York needs."
- Goldhagen is aglow amidst the "sublimely beautiful example of environmental architecture" that is The Sea Ranch: it may have failed as a model alternative to suburban sprawl, but "it offers a world-class model of a different sort."
- An economist calls out Irish architects and the RIAI, claiming current contracts allow them to avoid responsibility.
- RIAI's director begs to differ and claims the "argument is based on a false premise...We are all entitled to our opinions - but facts must also have their place."
- Details of the deal DIA struck with Calatrava re: his drawings for the Denver airport; it hasn't been an inexpensive venture, but authorities say "We got everything that we wanted."
- Zandberg minces no words about the decision to exclude architecture critics from the unveiling of Israel's national theater: it "is just the latest step in this absurdly secretive project" and "another example of the chronic absence of transparency in the fields of planning and architecture" (never mind what was done to a landmark: it "is not a renovation but an all-out revolution").
- Hawthorne hails us from 2012 Olympic venues: "Instead of having been designed to make a statement, as in Beijing, London's stadiums...promise to be an exercise in architectural restraint" (that's not a bad thing).
- Mays cheers a new West Don Lands condo complex that promises to be "one of the most imaginative multi-family residential schemes" in Toronto.
- Q&A with King re: San Francisco's epic preservation battles and how modernist architects manage to get their buildings built: "The way you get through the groups is to give them most of what they want."
- Dvir reports on the sad tale of how privatization is killing a kibbutz culture center: "it will likely not regain its past glory" and "likely to soon be abandoned altogether and become a silent, forgotten monument to the ethos on which the kibbutz was founded."
- Newport's battle over Maya Lin's plan for a memorial to Doris Duke: critics "denounced it as ersatz history and the result of a kind of celebrity-artist-shopping."
- An eyeeful of J. Mayer H.'s new Turkey-Georgia border crossing: "one might expect this striking seaside stunner to house a luxury hotel or millionaire's abode, in reality it serves as a customs checkpoint."
- An eyeeful of Atlantic Yards' prefab B2 tower (it "almost makes you miss Miss Brooklyn").
- Hadid shrugs off criticism: "they thought they were going to beat me up so much that I would give up. That was the plan, but I didn't."
- The finger-pointing starts after Beijing's airport terminal roof blows off for the second time: "the roof area was too large for maintenance workers to make sure every screw on the metal panels was tightened after five years' use" (huh?!?!?).
- Call for entries/ RFQ (deadline looms!): Leipzig Monument to Freedom and Unity.

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**Observations on Buildings and Landscapes: A lot of architects make a living talking...about site, landscape...Landscape is good; building is landscape; therefore building is good...Nothing sells like landscape...Architects are not required to be intellectually rigorous. They only have to convincingly sell ideas about how value is embedded in form in order to build.** By David Heymann -- Glenn Murcutt; Rafael Moneo; Antoine Predock; Zaha Hadid; Daniel Libeskind; Stan Allen; Marc McQuade; Morphosis [images, links] - Places Journal

**Squaring public space with human needs: Four centuries after the creation of Paris's divine Place des Vosges, North American cities continue to ignore its invaluable civic lessons. Why? "Most designers are into their own ego rather than creating something remarkably human," says Fred Kent... By Lisa Rochon -- William H. Whyte; Project for Public Spaces (PPS); Robert Gatje - Globe and Mail (Canada)**

**Visions of a Development Rising From the Sea: The Center for Urban Real Estate, a new research group at Columbia University, has proposed connecting Lower Manhattan with Governors Island by using landfill...would create 88 million square feet of development and generate \$16.7 billion in revenue for the city. It may be an impossible project...But it is the kind of big thinking that New York needs... -- Vishaan Chakrabarti; Marc Holliday [image] - New York Times**

**In Praise of The Sea Ranch, a Sublimely Beautiful Example of Environmental Architecture: ...Al Boeke...hoping to create a...model of suburban development alternative to American suburban sprawl. In this goal, he failed...it offers a world-class model of a different sort...Opponents of so called Big Government should be required to come to ...to see the best of what a right-minded, intelligently constructed democracy can produce. By Sarah Williams Goldhagen -- Al Boeke; Charles Moore; Donlyn Lyndon; William Turnbull; Joseph Esherick; Lawrence Halperin - The New Republic**

**Architects must answer for misery of bad building: As the inquiry into the Priory Hall fiasco intensifies, it will be interesting to see how many of our professional groups try to pass the buck...may lead to a stampede to avoid responsibility in the future...If the architectural profession is not prepared to step up to the mark, we should bring back clerks of works or other hands-on professionals to ensure works are carried out properly...Existing standard contracts need to be fundamentally re-examined... By Michael Casey - Irish Times**

**Allegation of 'cosy association' between architects and builders simply untrue: A response to Michael Casey's Opinion article criticising the architecture profession in Ireland...His argument is based on a false premise, as architects' responsibilities to their clients are set out in a separate document, the client-architect agreement, not the building contract...We are all entitled to our opinions - but facts must also have their place. By John Granby, Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI) - Irish Times**

**DIA settles with architect Calatrava on use of drawings: ...will allow Denver International Airport to use most of the work...\$250,000 licensing fee that will allow DIA to use the bulk of the architect's drawings submitted so far...Up to the point of the designer's withdrawal, DIA...had paid Calatrava and Festina Lente about \$13 million..."We got everything that we wanted"... - Denver Post**

**Habima reveals its new self - to some: The decision to exclude architecture critics from the long-awaited unveiling of the national theater is just the latest step in this absurdly secretive project...The renovation is not a renovation but an all-out revolution. The result is an entirely new building...and an entirely different presence in the urban space...the censorship of the architectural discourse during the guided tour...is another example of the chronic absence of transparency in the fields of planning and architecture. By Esther Zandberg -- Oscar Kaufman (1936); Ram Carmi - Ha'aretz (Israel)**

**London's Olympic venues challenge architects: Instead of having been designed to make a statement, as in Beijing, London's stadiums are a reminder of today's austere times...concerns about avoiding the white-elephant syndrome...next year's Olympics promise to be an exercise in architectural restraint...the differences in architectural tone between these games and the 2008 version would be tough to overstate...one of the clearest signs yet that the architectural boom years...in the West have definitively ended. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Zaha Hadid; Populous; Peter Cook; Wilkinson Eyre; Hopkins Architects; AECOM; George Hargreaves [slide show] - Los Angeles Times**

**River City's second act changes tack - and tone: West Don Lands condo complex changes colour and form as it stretches**

south, linked by an urban park beneath an elevated roadway...one of the most imaginative multi-family residential schemes to go public in Toronto during the past two years. By John Bentley Mays -- Saucier + Perrotte Architects; ZAS Architects; Phillips Farevaag Smallerberg; Planning Partnership- *Globe and Mail* (Canada)

Can Modern Architecture Ever Gain Favor in Historic Neighborhoods? San Francisco Chronicle's architecture critic weighs in on his city's epic preservation battles: John King talks about the city's preservationist culture, and how modernist architects manage to get their buildings built...."The way you get through the groups is to give them most of what they want."- *The Atlantic Cities*

Privatization killed the kibbutz culture center: Kibbutz Gvat's Beit Herschel community building was once the envy of the region...it will likely not regain its past glory...likely to soon be abandoned altogether and become a silent, forgotten monument to the socialist ethos on which the kibbutz...was founded. By Noam Dvir -- Yohanan Ratner (1937); Richard Kaufmann; Aryeh Sharon; David Resnick [image]- *Ha'aretz* (Israel)

Plan for a Memorial Splits Newport's Old Guard: Maya Lin's plan for a memorial to the heiress and preservationist Doris Duke in a park [Queen Anne Square] in Newport, R.I., has critics and defenders...denounced it as ersatz history and as the result of a kind of celebrity-artist-shopping... [image]- *New York Times*

J. Mayer H. Architects's Stylish New Turkey-Georgia Border Checkpoint: ...one might expect this striking seaside stunner to house a luxury hotel or millionaire's abode, in reality it serves as a customs checkpoint. [slide show]- *Artinfo*

Sorry, Brooklyn: This Is What Atlantic Yards Is Supposed To Look Like: ...B2 tower will, at 32-stories, be the "world's tallest prefabricated steel structure." Almost makes you miss Miss Brooklyn. -- SHoP Architects [images]- *Gothamist* (NYC)

"It's a Really Challenging Profession": Zaha Hadid on Shrugging Off Criticism to Rise to the Top...Broad Art Museum, the criticism she got for her second Stirling Prize, and how she has managed to climb the ladder in a male-dominated industry..."they thought they were going to beat me up so much that I would give up. That was the plan, but I didn't." [slide show]- *Artinfo*

Wind rips open Beijing's terminal roof: ...incidents of strong winds damaging T3 twice within the space of a year have made people skeptical about its quality...roof area was too large for maintenance workers to make sure every screw on the metal panels was tightened after five years' use. -- Fosters & Partners; Beijing Architectural Design and Research Institute- *China Daily*

Call for entries/Request for Qualifications/RFQ (international): Leipzig Monument to Freedom and Unity (the Peaceful Revolution of 1989); deadline: December 16- *City of Leipzig*

"Unbuilt Washington": The National Building Museum explores some breathtakingly beautiful and some simply bizarre proposals to shape - or re-shape - America's capital: Two architect/curators discuss the what-might-have-been architecture and urban design projects that would have made Washington, DC look very different today (and tomorrow). -- G. Martin Moeller, Jr.; Susan Piedmont-Palladino- *ArchNewsNow*



Rudy Ricciotti: Cocteau Museum, Severin Wunderman Collection, Menton, France

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